

We claim:

1 1. A call processing method for determining that a call has been call forwarded
2 comprising:

3 sending an initial address message having a redirection counter set to a maximum
4 allowed value;

5 receiving a response message in response to the initial address message; and

6 analyzing the response message to determine if the call has been forwarded.

1 2. The call processing method of claim 1, further comprising initiating fraud prevention
2 activity.

1 3. The call processing method of claim 2 wherein the fraud prevention activity includes
2 terminating the call.

1 4. The call processing method of claim 1, further comprising accessing a database to
2 obtain information indicative of whether the call represents unauthorized use of a
3 communications network.

1 5. The call processing method of claim 1, wherein the initial address message is an
2 Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) User Part (ISUP) protocol Initial Address
3 Message.

1 6. The call processing method of claim 1, further comprising sending another initial
2 address message having another redirection counter set to a predetermined value if it is
3 undetermined whether the call has been forwarded as a result of the analyzing step.

1 7. The call processing method of claim 6, wherein the predetermined value is zero.

1 8. A method of processing a call, comprising:
 2 determining whether the call is a forwarded call;
 3 responsive to a determination that the call is a forwarded call, preventing the call from
 4 being completed; and
 5 initiating fraud prevention activity.

1 9. The method of processing a call of claim 8, wherein initiating fraud prevention
 2 activity comprises :
 3 determining whether a dialed telephone number is subject to a call restriction;
 4 determining a telephone station to which the call will be connected;
 5 testing a second telephone number associated with the telephone station; and
 6 terminating the call if the second telephone number is subject to the call restriction.

1 10. The method of processing a call of claim 8, wherein said step of determining whether
 2 a call has been forwarded does not utilize a telecommunications switch through which the
 3 forwarded call passes.

1 11. The method of processing a call of claim 8, wherein determining whether a call is a
 2 forwarded call comprises:
 3 sending an initial address message having a redirection counter set to a maximum
 4 allowed value;
 5 receiving a response message in response to the initial address message; and

6 analyzing the response message to determine if the call has been forwarded.

1 12. The call processing method of claim 11, further comprising sending another initial
2 address message having another redirection counter set to a predetermined value if it is
3 undetermined whether the call has been forwarded as a result of the analyzing step.

1 13. The call processing method of claim 12, wherein the predetermined value is zero.

1 14. A method of processing a call, comprising:
2 determining whether a call is forwarded call; and
3 responsive to a determination that the call is a forwarded, initiating fraud prevention
4 activity in connection with processing the call,
5 wherein initiating fraud prevention activity comprises accessing a database to obtain
6 information indicative of whether the call represents unauthorized use of a communications
7 network.

1 15. The method of processing a call of claim 14, wherein determining whether a call is a
2 forwarded call includes determining whether the call will be completed to a dialed number.

1 16. The method of processing a call of claim 14, wherein determining whether a call is a
2 forwarded call comprises:
3 sending an initial address message having a redirection counter set to a predetermined
4 value;
5 receiving a response message in response to the initial address message indicating
6 whether the redirection counter was incremented; and

7 analyzing the response message to determine if the call has been forwarded.

1 17. The method of processing a call of claim 16, wherein the initial address message is an
2 Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) User Part (ISUP) protocol Initial Address
3 Message.

1 18. The method of processing a call of claim 16, further comprising sending another
2 initial address message having another redirection counter set to another predetermined value
3 if it is undetermined whether the call has been forwarded as a result of the analyzing step.

1 19. The method of processing a call of claim 18, wherein the another predetermined
2 value is zero.

1 20. A call processing method for terminating a forwarded call, comprising:
2 sending an initial address message having a redirection counter set to a maximum
3 allowed value;
4 receiving a response message in response to the initial address message;
5 analyzing the response message to determine if the call has been forwarded; and
6 terminating the call in response to a determination that the call has been forwarded.

1 21. The call processing method of claim 20, wherein the initial address message is an
2 Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) User Part (ISUP) protocol Initial Address
3 Message.

22. The call processing method of claim 20, further comprising sending another initial address message having another redirection counter set to a predetermined value if it is undetermined whether the call has been forwarded as a result of the analyzing step

23. The call processing method of claim 22, wherein the predetermined value is zero.

24. A method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting, comprising:
generating an initial address message based on a first telephone number associated with a call from a first telephone station, the initial address message having a redirection counter set to a predetermined value;
attempting to increment a value of the redirection counter when a switch attempts to forward the call to a second telephone number associated with a respective telephone station, wherein the second telephone number is not a dialed telephone number;
preventing the call from being connected to the second telephone station if the attempt to increment the value of the redirection counter fails; and
connecting the call to the second telephone station if the attempt to increment the value of the redirection counter is successful.

25. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 24, further comprising generating a release message indicating that the call could not be set up if the call is prevented from being connected to the second telephone station.

26. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 24, further comprising initiating fraud prevention activity if the attempt to increment the value of the redirection counter fails.

1 27. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 24, further
2 comprising setting the value of the redirection counter to a maximum allowed value when the
3 initial address message is generated.

1 28. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 24, wherein the
2 initial address message is an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) User Part (ISUP)
3 protocol Initial Address Message.

1 29. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 25, further
2 comprising generating another initial address message associated with the call if the release
3 message is generated.

1 30. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 25, further
2 comprising generating another initial address message associated with the call and having a
3 redirection counter set to another predetermined value, if the release message is generated.

1 31. The method of preventing forwarded calls from connecting of claim 30, wherein the
2 another predetermined value is zero.